United Nations S/PV.3563

Security Council

Fiftieth Year

Provisional

3563rd Meeting
Thursday, 10 August 1995, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Wisnumurti	(Indonesia)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cárdenas
	Botswana	Mr. Nkgowe
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Czech Republic	Mr. Kovanda
	France	Mr. Ladsous
	Germany	Mr. Eitel
	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Nigeria	Mr. Gambari
	Oman	Mr. Al-Khussaiby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Sidorov
	Rwanda	Mr. Ubalijoro
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mrs. Albright

Agenda

The situation in Croatia

Report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 981 (1995) (S/1995/650)

Letter dated 7 August 1995 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1995/666)

95-85820 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Croatia

Report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 981 (1995) (S/1995/650)

Letter dated 7 August 1995 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1995/666)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Nobilo (Croatia) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Misić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) took a place at the side of the Council chamber.

The President: I have also received a request dated 10 August 1995 from Ambassador Dragomir Djokic to address the Council. With the consent of the Council, I would propose to invite him to address the Council in the course of the discussion of the item before it.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 981 (1995), document S/1995/650, and the letter dated 7 August 1995 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/1995/666.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1995/676, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following other documents: S/1995/658 and S/1995/660, letters dated 7 August 1995 from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/1995/656 and S/1995/663, letters dated 4 and 6 August 1995, respectively, from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/1995/662 and S/1995/664, letters dated 6 and 7 August 1995, respectively, from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/1995/670, letter dated 8 August 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/1995/672, letter dated 8 August 1995 from the Acting Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; and S/1995/675, letter dated 9 August 1995 from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The first speaker is the representative of Croatia, on whom I now call.

Mr. Nobilo (Croatia): Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on Indonesia's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation on the many important issues currently before the Council.

I should also like to extend my congratulations to the delegation of Honduras on the exemplary way in which it coordinated the work of the Council during the month of July.

After four years of the utmost patience and restraint, the Republic of Croatia accurately concluded that the least costly solution for both Croatia and the international community to end Croatia's agony and the international

community's humanitarian concerns in Bosnia and Herzegovina would require a limited but credible use of force that would end the siege of Bihac and restore order in adjacent occupied territories of Croatia. This action was successfully completed on Monday, in 84 hours.

I should just like to add in this regard that most of the remaining pockets of resistance surrendered yesterday, with the assistance and mediation of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO). The relevant authorities have commenced giving access to the reintegrated areas to UNCRO, humanitarian organizations and media, consistent with reasonable security precautions.

My Government's security operations in the so-called Krajina region of Croatia cannot be equated with earlier actions by Belgrade and its proxies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. Nevertheless, some are still tempted to find such convenient, but legally and morally corrupt, comparisons.

My Government's action was carried out mostly on its internationally recognized territory and in part of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the express request of that Government. Establishing sovereignty and security on its own territory and coming to the aid of a friendly Government is fully consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and is a hallmark of international relations and behaviour. The earlier actions by Belgrade and its proxies were foreign aggression, pure and simple, against a legally declared and, later, internationally recognized Member State. This fact has been recognized in various documents, and most precisely in General Assembly resolution 49/43. Any such comparison, therefore, not only breeds ill will in Croatia's public opinion but also calls into question well-established practice of international law and norms of international behaviour.

The operation against Knin, which lasted one day, cannot be equated with the shelling and complete destruction of Vukovar, which lasted four months, nor with the siege of Sarajevo, which has gone on more than three years. Who can seriously condemn Croatia's short and professional action, which in its second day ended the siege of Bihac, a siege that lasted more than three years and would have continued for who knows how much longer without our action?

The siege of Bihac was a major concern for the Council. It has been resolved at minimal cost to the international community and to the civilian population in the area. Therefore, my delegation regrets that the Council did not accept my delegation's amendment that would have acknowledged that the siege of Bihac had been successfully lifted.

This security action was undertaken with the utmost regard for limiting collateral damage and protecting civilians and United Nations personnel on the ground. The extremely short duration of a security action of this magnitude only confirms that we were very successful on all of these counts.

The operation was not perfectly free of wrongdoing, however. But, clearly, no one can expect an operation that includes some 150,000 troops on both sides to be completely free of collateral damage. Nevertheless, the Croatian Government deeply regrets the loss of innocent civilian lives and the loss of the lives of three UNCRO peace-keepers. My delegation joins my Foreign Minister in expressing our sincere condolences to the families of the three soldiers from the Kingdom of Denmark and the Czech Republic, which will for ever be affected by those losses.

In this regard, I must emphasize that my Government has accepted its part of the responsibility for these and other casualties amongst the United Nations personnel, and has already taken appropriate measures to remedy the costs of individual indiscretions and criminal acts against the peace-keepers. The same measures will be taken against the individuals who have acted against innocent civilians and their property. Along with these remedies, my Government has already taken various measures and programmes to normalize life in the reintegrated areas and to limit the humanitarian consequences of the Serb exodus from Croatia.

The exodus of ethnic Serbs from one region of Croatia cannot be compared to the earlier Serbian ethnic cleansing of non-Serbs from the same region, nor to the present expulsion of non-Serbs from Srebrenica and Zepa.

The exodus of Serbs from this region of Croatia is a tragedy, but not of Croatia's making. My Government has made numerous appeals to the ethnic Serb citizens of Croatia to stay and offered them amnesty, resources and protection to do so, while their own leadership, it is becoming increasingly evident, was ordering them to leave. The former Croatian Serb leader Milan Babic suggested as much in an interview with Radio Belgrade on Tuesday. The self-proclaimed authorities in Knin may

have decided on mass evacuation in order to provoke international outrage against Croatia and a military response from Belgrade, Babic suggested.

The Council should also recall that immediately after our security action began in the Western Slavonia region in early May the former so-called president, Milan Martic, of the so-called Krajina issued such evacuation orders and asked for United Nations assistance in transporting all Serbs from that region.

This exodus is a tragedy because of the Serbian policy seeking a nation-exclusive State. These and many other Serbs have been misled by their leaders, by their opinion-makers and by their Church into believing that Serbs cannot live with Croats or with Muslims or, for that matter, with almost anyone else. This manufactured belief is the real tragedy, and there is nothing that my Government or the international community can do to change it and make them stay at this time. Clearly, the Serbs from the so-called Krajina are victims of their own leadership's folly.

Nevertheless, my Government — in the words of my Prime Minister at the meeting with the local leaders from the reintegrated territories on Tuesday —

> "would repeat appeals to civilians who have fled to return."

Many will eventually return, but only when they are able to overcome the tragedy of their leaders and beliefs. Croatia will welcome them. They and the international community should know that twice as many Serbs live in Croatia as the number who fled from the so-called Krajina region. Most Serbs would not be manipulated by the Belgrade-inspired propaganda. As a result, today they live in the homes that their families lived in for centuries, enjoying peace and paying the price of war, in the same way as all other citizens of Croatia.

Croatia's security actions can be seen not as following the logic of war, but as establishing a solid foundation for a just peace. The new balance in the region will rejuvenate the peace process in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. We must recall that prior to Croatia's action the peace process in the region was deadlocked for months. The Bosnian Serb leadership had rejected the Contact Group plan, and the Croatian Serb leadership refused to negotiate at all. The latter's eleventh-hour transformation, despite some claims to the contrary, was neither genuine nor real. After four years of their stalling and refusal to accept a single non-Serb displaced person back into their territories, we should not have had any illusions about the intentions of the Knin leaders.

Moreover, their eleventh-hour promises did not in any way correspond to their actions on the ground. For confirmation, we do not have to look any further than the situation in Bihac. The offensive on Bihac stopped, and the siege was ended, only when the Croatian Army and police forces became engaged in the area.

My Government fully supports the new initiative by the United States to find ways to restart the negotiating process in a timely manner, and would support a new conference along the lines suggested by the President of the Russian Federation, His Excellency Mr. Boris Yeltsin, if it were carefully prepared and if the President of the Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, His Excellency Mr. Alija Izetbegovic, were also to attend. The new negotiations should be based on the principle of mutual recognition among all successor States of the former Yugoslavia, on the Contact Group plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina and on the linkage of the sanctions regime against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to its role in the implementation of a negotiated settlement for the Serbian minority in Croatia.

This linkage will be especially important in respect of a successful resolution to the problem of the remaining occupied territory in Croatia — the Vukovar region, or the former Sector East. My Government has no present military plans for this region and will invest all possible resources to resolve the problem peacefully. The Belgrade occupation of this territory of Croatia could not be more evident, and any premature easing of the sanctions regime without resolving this problem first may leave my Government with no other option than a military one.

My Government will also look to UNCRO to assist Croatia in resolving the problem of the Vukovar region peacefully. UNCRO's implementation of its mandate, which also calls for control of the international borders of Croatia that are not under control of the Croatian Government, will go a long way to achieving this critical objective of the peace process. As UNCRO redefines its role in the reintegrated areas of Croatia, my Government would welcome a redeployment of some of its excess resources to the international border in the Vukovar region.

The President: I thank the representative of Croatia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Misić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the duties of President of the Security Council for the current month and to wish you all success. I should also like to recognize the valuable contribution of your predecessor, Mr. Martínez Blanco, and the entire delegation of Honduras in guiding the work of the Council last month.

There are two draft resolutions before the Council today. These focus on the greatest consequence of the adventurism of Serbia's nationalist leadership and the international community's lack of preparedness and ability to halt aggression, terrorism and genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia.

Of course, the highest priority right now is to alleviate human suffering and ensure safety and humanitarian assistance for the flood of refugees and their accommodation at the destinations of their choice, and not of the despotic strategists who tailor new borders and demographic changes of tectonic power.

This should lead to a more serious and more far-reaching engagement by the international community — primarily the Security Council — in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and other parts of the former Yugoslavia, particularly Sandzak and Kosovo, where hundreds of thousands of Bosniac Muslims and 2 million Albanians suffer systematic deprivation and terror at the hands of the ruling regime in Belgrade.

Above all, it will be necessary and only natural after their total collapse to examine the strategy and concepts for resolving the tragedy brought upon the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, it will be absolutely logical, putting egos aside, to give critical consideration to the failure of, and serious loss of confidence in, the key mediators whom the United Nations and the European Union have entrusted with promoting and implementing established principles. Not to go into all the serious faults and misconceived premises of the current strategy in finding a resolution to the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to retain the same plans and the same "contractors" even after their total failure, would be as illogical as it would be deadly for the prospects of peace and stability in this part of the world.

The mediators who salve their egos and compensate for their professional failures by inventing ethnogenetic theories on the Serbian roots of both Croats and Bosniac Muslims, by intervening in the work of the International war crimes Tribunal or by persistently equating the terrorists and the terrorized cannot contribute anything much more than complications, larger failures and more suffering by innocent people.

Croatia's action in defence of its territories and its rights, and in promotion of peace and stability within its borders, has turned to ashes several of the cardinal fallacies espoused by some key factors to promote their own agendas. The Croatian action has preserved the Bihac safe area, which the international community had given up on following its surrender of the Zepa and Srebrenica safe areas to The Hague invitees, Mladic and Karadzic, and has destroyed the myth of the invincibility and commitment of armed Serbian gangs.

It has destroyed the premise of those who ignorantly bleated to Bosnia and Herzegovina, to Croatia and to a world demanding justice that any action against the aggressor in Bosnia and Herzegovina would require a mighty force like that used in the Gulf.

It has dashed the selfish arguments of those who spare no effort to convince both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia to accept military defeat and to accept the tailoring of their borders not only according to plans offered to Pale and Knin — offered and each time refused — but according to plans conforming to the dictates of the ever more arrogant Karadzic, Mladic and Martic.

It has prevented the international community from rewarding the Yugoslav aggression in Croatia, which would have led to irreparable damage and suffering to the quality of life in the territories of former Yugoslavia for decades to come.

The Croatian action of extinguishing the fire in its own house and subduing the arsonist has shown that some in the international community have practically begun to struggle to maintain occupation rather than peace and stability.

The neutralization of the terrorist centre in Croatia should also halt the financial waste levied on the world's

taxpayers for a peace force and a grossly bureaucratic apparatus intended to maintain the status quo in Croatia. This burden is mostly borne by the taxpayers of the country which is host to the United Nations and whose wisdom helped create and realize the ideas of the League of Nations and the United Nations.

The Croatian victory has concurrently disclosed the real nature of the terrorists and the dangerous misconceptions of the international community, which, instead of quickly identifying the criminals, has promoted them to negotiators and has almost legalized them as Government officials and statesmen. It has uncovered the very logic, the very mechanism and the very perpetrators of the aggression and terror in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has shown that the leaders of terrorism do not care even for the lives of their own nationals, their own people. Martic and his commanders, not the Croatian Army and police, expelled Serbs from Krajina and forced innocent civilians to leave their homes for the exile of Serbia, whose leaders have many times in the past manipulated Serbs from other parts of the Balkans and used them as cannon fodder, and are doing so once again.

The quarrel between the leaders of Serb Krajina reported by a Serbian news agency and by international media reveals that their goal was to start this huge exodus of the population in order to provoke the international community to retaliate against Croatia and to draw Serbia once again into open war adventurism.

The innocent Serb civilians are again being manipulated by their self-serving leaders, black marketeers and war profiteers, amateur statesmen but certainly professional war criminals. Let us hope that this is the last time — never again — the world will watch these sad pictures, directed for us by those who for more than three years pulled the leg of very cooperative and acquiescent representatives of the international community by rejecting all initiatives for solving the crisis in Croatia and for the peaceful reintegration of Krajina into the sovereign and independent State of Croatia.

The world could and should also note that this latest exodus of Serbs from Croatia, though very sad and unfortunate, and though absolutely excessive and unnecessary, is at its core somewhat different from the expulsions and extermination of peoples over the past four years from the territories of Croatia and of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Serbs of formerly occupied Croatia are leaving in vehicles — tractors, cars, buses — and are able to take a significant portion of their belongings. Muslims and Croats have had to leave everything and start on foot into the uncertain, very often across mine fields and through front lines, and most frequently after having been humiliated, raped, tortured, beaten — while some 200,000 were killed, massacred, so that they would reach nowhere.

Fortunately, with this latest exodus of innocent Serb civilians, the standards of conduct and care by the international community, in particular of humanitarian organizations, have risen, in order to alleviate the plight of these people and to ensure their safety. We have increasingly seen pictures of leading members of international humanitarian organizations and the highest representatives of the United Nations who had not been even close to Vukovar, Prijedor, Foca or Srebrenica, not to mention the concentration camps in Bosnia and Herzegovina where tens of thousands of innocent Bosniac Muslims have perished. We hope that these improved standards will remain in place in the future and will be extended to all regions, but let us also hope for — and first and foremost let us take all measures necessary towards creating — a situation where the need for humanitarian assistance and rescue actions in these regions will cease to exist.

After all, Croatia has not endangered peace or stability with its latest action. It has, by utilizing its sovereign and inherent rights, made a most significant contribution to peace and created conditions under which the Pale Serbs can learn a lesson from the defeat of their Knin friends. The world should not search in Croatia for those guilty of causing the exodus of these tens of thousands of civilians — camouflaged and intermingled among them armed thugs who for four years terrorized not only Croatia and western Bosnia but their own compatriots. Those guilty of causing this latest exodus have already escaped to Belgrade and they should be looked for there, together with their bosses who now denounce them and who are beginning to realize all the limitations and the unreliability of the militarily aggressive actions which were intended only to further their own political goals.

This is not the defeat of the Serbian people in Croatia, though, unfortunately, it is the Serbian people who are succumbing to the manipulation and propaganda machinery of armed criminals and of Milosevic's Serbia and who are now paying the price. This is a victory of the Croatian army over the terrorists and criminals among the Serbians, who wanted to carry out violence against history and against innocent civilians on both

sides. When justice is done, I am confident that both the Serbian and the Croatian peoples will find the way to rehabilitate themselves from the injustices perpetrated on them and to heal their wounds, no matter how deep they may be. Therefore it is high time that justice was done.

The President: I thank the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the kind words he addressed to me.

In accordance with the decision taken earlier in the meeting, I now invite Ambassador Dragomir Djokić to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

Mr. Djokić: In the early morning hours of 4 August 1995, the Croatian Government and the regime of Mr. Tudjman embarked upon the final act to attain the goal of Croatian extreme nationalists and fascists to exterminate or expel the Serb people from Krajina. By the horrifying indiscriminate mass artillery and missile bombardment of predominantly civilian targets in all the towns of Serb Krajina, Croatia unambiguously demonstrated that one of its main goals, apart from imposing its sovereignty over Krajina, was to inflict heavy losses on the civilian population and by so doing incite a mass exodus of Serbs in order to create an ethnically pure Croat state. Regrettably, the Croatian strategy has been successful as columns of more than 200,000 Serbs, almost the entire population of the parts of Krajina seized in the latest Croat aggression, are now fleeing Krajina into neighbouring Bosnia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This no doubt represents the most massive and shameless example of large-scale "ethnic cleansing" since the crisis in the territory of previous Yugoslavia began in 1991.

After more than 100 years, the final solution of Croatian extremists espoused in the infamous maxim of the leader of the Croatian Party of the Right, Ante Starcevic, in regard to resolving the Serb question — to annihilate a third, expel a third and assimilate a third — is practically being realized. The regime of Mr. Tudjman is on the verge of achieving what the Croatian Ustashi fascists did not achieve during the nightmare of the Second World War, when 700,000 Serbs were slaughtered in the so-called "Independent State of Croatia": the total extermination and cleansing of the Serbs from their ancestral homes in Krajina.

The overt genocide that the Croatian Government is conducting against the Krajina Serbs, the mass murder of civilians - women, children and the elderly - is telling proof that the fear that Mr. Tudjman's regime, and its checker-board flag under which so many Serbs were mercilessly killed during the Second World War, instilled in the Krajina Serbs was totally justified and that they had no choice but to rebel against it.

Long before the aggression against the Krajina Serbs, pressures and intensive preparations by Croatia had begun for a confrontation with the Serbs. More than 350,000 Serbs from the territories which are under Croat control had already fled. On the other hand, those who attempted to remain in their homes were mistreated in every conceivable way and many of them were forcibly converted to the Catholic faith. Discrimination in all areas of everyday life and work — eviction, lay-offs on grounds of nationality, and illegal seizure of property and gross violations of fundamental human and civil rights — were rampant. During Croatia's aggression against the Sector West United Nations protected areas in May of this year, virtually the whole Serb population was murdered, wounded, imprisoned or expelled from the region.

By opting for all-out aggression against the Republic of Serb Krajina, the Croatian Government not only attacked the Serb population but also flagrantly violated the Security Council resolutions which established the United Nations protected areas in Krajina, with the aim of protecting the local population, and breached the Vance plan. The Croatian Government acted in total disregard of the unambiguous and clear-cut demands by the Security Council, set out in its resolution 994 (1995) and a number of presidential statements, that it refrain from taking any further military measures or actions that could lead to the escalation of the situation, and particularly that it cease all military actions in and around Sector South; and of warnings that in the event of failure to comply with this demand the Security Council would consider further steps to ensure such compliance. In its massive onslaught the Croatian forces have deliberately targeted United Nations peace-keepers, murdering and wounding many of them. It is no wonder that the Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Mr. Carl Bildt, condemned the Croat offensive in the strongest terms and raised the possibility of Mr. Tudjman's being indicted for war crimes.

By mounting this aggression against Krajina, Croatia has clearly shown that it represents the greatest danger to peace in the Balkans. It is particularly noteworthy that Croatia's brutal aggression took place at the time of the resumption of direct negotiations between Knin and Zagreb, in which the Krajina side expressed the greatest

readiness for a political solution to the status of Krajina, making serious concessions and accepting the seven-point plan for the urgent settlement of the crisis proposed by the Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Mr. Stoltenberg. As has been the case on so many occasions when there was a possibility of achieving a peaceful negotiated settlement to the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, measures were taken to avert a political solution, and the war option once again prevailed.

It is obvious that the Croatian Government would not have dared decide to undertake such a broad and meticulously planned aggression without the backing of some major Powers. From the time of the German-led premature recognition of Croatia and other former Yugoslav republics, such support has not been lacking. These Powers have decided to shun the only possible policy for a just and lasting settlement of the Yugoslav crisis - the fully equal treatment of all Yugoslav nations and their interests - in favour of a policy of double standards and biased support for some sides and unprecedented condemnation and satanization of others.

It has not escaped the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that the United States of America has signed a military cooperation agreement with Croatia. United States military advisers are lending technical and logistical assistance to Croatian armed forces. The United States has also strongly backed the Bosnian Muslim-Croat Federation and its confederation with Croatia, in an attempt to create an anti-Serb front in the Balkans. This cooperation has now borne fruit in the aggression of Croatia against Krajina. The Foreign Minister of Croatia himself confirmed that the United States gave advice to Croatia on how to execute the mass attack on Serb Krajina and tacitly approved such an operation. It is also evident from the ongoing aggression that the arms embargo against Croatia has been a sham, since from its introduction Croatia has been receiving the most sophisticated and modern weaponry.

It is particularly worrisome and disconcerting that the Security Council and the international community have not condemned the brutal Croatian aggression. What should happen for the Security Council to decide to act and put an end to the cold-blooded aggression of Croatia against Krajina and the enormous threat to peace and security in the region, which could lead to an uncontrollable escalation with unforeseen consequences?

After having previously committed seven armed attacks on the United Nations protected areas since they were established in 1992, in a brazen affront to the whole United Nations operation in the previous Yugoslavia, Croatia decided to do away with the protected areas and the United Nations peace-keeping mission altogether. Moreover, Croatia has totally ignored the calls of the international community to give up the military option and to show due respect for the United Nations representatives.

Can this be allowed to go unpunished?

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia expresses its utmost concern in the wake of the dramatic humanitarian situation caused by the Croatian aggression on Krajina. For its part, it has taken urgent and energetic measures, but we call upon the Security Council to engage all Members of the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations in providing urgent assistance to alleviate the tragic fate of more than 200,000 Serb refugees who were forced to flee Krajina. The most urgent needs include food, medicines, medical supplies, clothes, tents and blankets.

We hope that the international community will demonstrate compassion and concern for the tragic destiny of the Krajina Serb population and urgently respond to the unprecedented humanitarian disaster, in which the Serb people from Krajina have lost virtually everything and are at the very limit of their endurance.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia urges the Security Council to make Croatia allow access to the representatives of the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to the territories of Krajina recently occupied by Croatian military forces in order to conduct a thorough and objective investigation into the monstrous crimes committed against the Krajina Serbs — massacres, torture, opening fire on columns of refugees, using Serb soldiers, civilians and United Nations representatives as human shields, as well as widespread looting.

From the very beginning of the outbreak of the crisis in the territory of the previous Yugoslavia, the Security Council has directed its decisions and activities against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, imposing on it, without any justification, the most comprehensive, harsh and unprecedented sanctions in the history of the United Nations. The following question must be asked: what criteria is the Security Council now using, considering the open aggression of Croatia against Krajina and flagrant violations of humanitarian law?

Even without the sanctions, which have disastrous effects, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia would hardly be in a position to effectively cope with the overwhelming burden caused by the latest influx of tens of thousands of new refugees regarding accommodation, food supplies, medicines and clothes, particularly since most of them are children, women, the elderly, the wounded and the sick. This is just one more reason for the legitimate request that the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia be urgently lifted, since they stand in the way of the overall political solution to the Yugoslav crisis.

On the other side, the Security Council is regrettably not endeavouring even to secure the implementation of its own decisions and resolutions regarding the arms embargo on Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the prevention of "ethnic cleansing" and the prosecution of Croatian, as well as Bosnian Muslim and Bosnian Croat war criminals.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia notes with the utmost indignation and bitterness that the international community has not undertaken resolute measures to stop and "disenable" the monstrous policy of Croatia against the Krajina Serbs. A week has passed without the Security Council condemning by even one word the massive bombardment of Krajina towns, destruction of water supply systems, shelling of hospitals and other civilian targets, premeditated killing of innocent civilians and commission of war crimes against them.

Particular responsibility rests with the Security Council, whose primary role, under Chapter VII of the Charter, is to maintain peace and security and protect the victims of aggression. The Security Council, which has already admitted that such actions by Croatia seriously threaten to escalate the conflict, must take concrete and resolute measures against such criminal and genocidal acts by Croatia.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is very disappointed that the Security Council did not most resolutely condemn the Croatian aggression and the crimes committed, particularly "ethnic cleansing" and other gross violations of fundamental norms of international humanitarian law, human rights and the principles of international law in times of war, in the light of the horrible crimes that the Croatian army committed against Serbian civilians and prisoners of war.

It is particularly distressing that the Council did not demand that Croatian troops withdraw to the positions held prior to the aggression of 4 August 1995 and that the calls for the introduction of comprehensive sanctions against Croatia were ignored. The resolution that the Council is about to adopt represents a pale and totally inadequate response to the drama that has been unfolding in Krajina. Once again the Security Council has not managed to rid itself of its persistent bias in treating the peoples of the previous Yugoslavia in an unequal manner. The greatest "ethnic cleansing" ever committed in the territories of the former Yugoslavia, the virtual expulsion of the Serbs from Krajina, has met with a much milder response than when the Council has taken action regarding atrocities committed against other peoples.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia reiterates its firm commitment to a political and negotiated solution of all problems in the territory of the previous Yugoslavia, and particularly those that have arisen due to the aggression of Croatia against Krajina.

Trusting that Europe and the international community as a whole cannot accept the brutal creation of an ethnically pure Croatia based on the expulsion of more than 200,000 innocent civilians, we expect an immediate and effective response by this Council. Should it fail so to respond, the Security Council will become an accessory to bringing about a tragedy for an entire people who have lived in those territories for centuries, and it will not be able to evade its responsibility for all the consequences that may arise as a result of the brutal Croatian aggression.

The time to take energetic action to reach a just political solution in the territories of the previous Yugoslavia is running out. With every day that is lost, we will be faced with new challenges which will only make the situation more complex and more dangerous — and not only for the countries of that region. If the Security Council sincerely wishes to avoid that, it must act resolutely and immediately, without any further delay.

The President: It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria): The objective of the international community's involvement in the territories of the former Yugoslavia is to promote peace and discourage more war, and therefore the outbreak of hostilities and the broad military offensive of the Croatian Government, following the failure of the recent Geneva talks, are regrettable. The Security Council therefore condemned these negative developments in its presidential statement of 4 August 1995.

The launching of the military offensive has produced very serious and negative consequences. Through the Secretary-General's letter of 7 August 1995 and the constant, almost daily briefings of the Secretariat, we have been made aware of some worrisome developments. It has come to light, for example, that our Blue Helmets were not only attacked but also used as human shields and made to march in front of the advancing Croatian army. United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) personnel have already suffered three fatalities. My Government would like to seize this opportunity to send its formal condolences to the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of Denmark for the loss of some of their brave young men.

Furthermore, we are now faced with the humanitarian nightmare of the war, with over 100,000 refugees and displaced persons urgently needing assistance. Related to this, we have confirmed reports of the shelling of some refugee columns and civilian targets.

The draft resolution before us, dealing with Croatia, attempts to respond to some of this fallout from the broad military offensive by the Croatian Government and is aimed at helping to stabilize the situation. Hence, the draft resolution will enjoy the support of my delegation.

In accordance with the text of the draft resolution, my delegation regrets the breakdown of the Geneva talks, deplores the recent military offensive of the Croatian Government and condemns the shelling of civilian targets. My Government unreservedly condemns the unacceptable acts of the Croatian Government forces against UNCRO personnel and the civilian population and would like to remind the Croatian Government of its duty to ensure the safety and protection of United Nations personnel within its territory, as well as of its obligations under international humanitarian law. We have condemned, vigorously and often, the Bosnian Serbs for such actions, and we find them even more objectionable coming from the army of a Member State of the United Nations. We hope the investigations and processes under way to identify and punish the culprits will be concluded soon.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, we fully endorse the request made to the Secretary-General in operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution to assess urgently, in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the humanitarian situation and needs of the civilian population, both refugees and internationally displaced persons. Furthermore, we call on the Croatian authorities to move quickly to restore normality to all the areas under their control, ensure safe passage for those who want to leave and encourage the return of those who would like to go back to their homes.

As the Security Council has emphasized repeatedly, there can be no military solution to the conflict in Croatia or, indeed, throughout the former Yugoslavia. My delegation believes that all efforts must therefore be made and, indeed, intensified to avoid broadening war in the Balkans. We urge all the parties and others concerned to exercise maximum restraint on all fronts, and especially in the area known as Sector East. We further call on all the parties to return to the negotiating table and promptly resume talks under the auspices of the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

My delegation believes that a peaceful solution to the conflict in Croatia and Bosnia is still possible and is now even more urgent. The prospect of a larger Balkan conflict is not unavoidable. Events on the ground may, in fact, have offered new negotiating possibilities for a settlement in the Balkans. However, time is of the essence, and we need to redouble our efforts if we are to take advantage of the latest developments on the ground to get political negotiations restarted and intensified.

In this connection, the Contact Group must redouble its efforts and demonstrate greater unity of action in its dealings with all the parties, with no favourites. We must propose solutions that would promote a comprehensive and lasting peace that ensures the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States in the former Yugoslavia within their internationally recognized borders and on the basis of mutual recognition of all the successor States. Moreover, all genuine efforts and initiatives must be welcomed and encouraged, and that is why the recent initiative of President Yeltsin of the Russian Federation

and those of some other members of the Contact Group deserve our full support.

Finally, we salute all the personnel of UNCRO and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) for their continued service in the cause of peace and their discharge of their noble duties under very trying and exceptional circumstances.

Mr. Eitel (Germany): Today's debate on Croatia reflects the sad fact that once again the logic of confrontation and war has triumphed in the former Yugoslavia. Despite enormous and sustained efforts by the international community, the search for an overall negotiated settlement which would bring back peace and peaceful coexistence to the former Yugoslavia has not yielded the desired results. Instead, we see pictures of human suffering, burning houses and tens of thousands of refugees on the move. Thus, with a deep sense of frustration, we again must observe that mutual distrust, tensions and hatred, unleashed in 1991 by an outbreak of excessive nationalism, continue to haunt the former Yugoslavia.

Germany strongly deplores the decision of the Croatian Government to use military means to regain those Croatian territories previously known as Sector South and Sector North. Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Kinkel urged the Croatian Government, up to the last minute, to refrain from using force and to fully exhaust the means of dialogue and negotiations for a peaceful reintegration of the territories in question.

The cost of the Croatian offensive in terms of human lives and suffering is high. Croatia has taken a heavy responsibility upon itself. It must now face the consequences. One consequence is that Croatian behaviour with regard to the treatment and human rights of the Serb population and the refugees will be observed most attentively by the international community.

We strongly condemn the shelling of civilian targets and attacks by Croatian Government forces against personnel of the United Nations peace-keeping forces, in particular those which resulted in the death of a Danish member and two Czech members of those forces. We express our condolences to the Danish and Czech Governments and to the families of the deceased. There are other reports of attacks against and abuses of United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) personnel and Serbian civilians. We expect the Croatian side to examine these allegations in the most serious manner and to bring to justice those members of its armed forces whose misdeeds can be established. We welcome the relevant promises we have just heard from the representative of Croatia.

The German commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia continues to be firm. In response to what has just been said by the representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), I want to point out that the insurrection in the mainly Serb-inhabited areas of Krajina and the establishment of Serb control over a large part of the territory of Croatia by Croatian Serbs, which took place in 1991 with the decisive assistance of the former Yugoslav army, must not be forgotten. It is something which no country could have accepted.

While we deeply regret the recent Croatian action, we are ready to acknowledge that Croatia's patience has been tested severely over a long time by the intransigence of the Croatian Serb leadership and by the great number of cease-fire violations committed by Croatian Serb forces and their pattern of cross-border attacks — in particular, in the area of Bihac.

In the German view, there are now three priorities. First, the urgent humanitarian needs must be addressed, and full respect for human rights must be ensured. Secondly, the situation in and around Croatia must be stabilized. Thirdly, the conflicting parties must be brought back to the negotiating table.

We strongly urge all parties to exercise the maximum restraint in and around Sector East. This demand applies also to the Government in Belgrade — we remember the siege and fall of Vukovar.

Croatia must ensure that the human rights and minority rights of the Serbs of the former Sector East and Sector North are fully respected. We are deeply concerned about the fate of the Croatian Serb refugees. We consider it crucial that Croatia guarantee the right of these refugees to return and that the Croatian authorities do everything in their power to create circumstances and a climate conducive to such a return.

We welcome the commitments made by the Croatian leaders in this respect, to which the representative of Croatia has just referred, in the agreement with the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) of 6 August 1995 and call upon the Croatian authorities to strictly adhere to these

commitments. Croatia must create a situation in which Croatian Serbs, including those currently fleeing Croatia, have a clear perspective that they will be able to live in peace, safety and dignity, and without discrimination, in their homeland. This is what Europe expects from Croatia.

Germany, despite the more than 400,000 refugees from the former Yugoslavia already in Germany, reaffirms its readiness to help to alleviate the humanitarian plight. We would like to appeal to all States, and especially our European partners, to do likewise.

Germany reaffirms its commitment to the efforts for a political settlement. We call on the Government of Croatia and the leadership of the Croatian Serbs to cooperate fully with international efforts for such a negotiated settlement. The day must come when Croats and Serbs can again shake hands and live together in peace.

It is in this hope that we shall vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) *(interpretation from Chinese):* Recently, the situation in Croatia has deteriorated drastically, marked by a rapid escalation of military conflict and attacks on United Nations peace-keeping personnel, plunging innocent civilians into an abyss of misery and forcing large numbers of refugees to leave their homeland. The humanitarian situation in the region is extremely grim, and the Chinese delegation is deeply concerned about this situation.

The current situation in the former Yugoslavia, rather than cooling down, has heated up and grown even more tense and turbulent. Once the flames of war spread, the situation will be uncontrollable and unmanageable. This will not only bring huge calamities to the people in the region, but also pose a serious threat to peace and stability in Europe and the world as a whole. Therefore, we strongly urge the parties concerned, taking into account the long-term interests of all ethnic groups in the region, to stop all military action immediately and peacefully settle their conflicts through negotiations. At present, it is imperative that the problem of the large exodus of refugees and other grave humanitarian problems be resolved. At the same time, we strongly call on the parties concerned to ensure the safety of the personnel of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO).

We have consistently held that the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries of the former Yugoslavia should be fully respected and that countries in the region should recognize and live in amity with each other and work together to advance the process of a comprehensive political settlement. We support the diplomatic and political efforts made by the international community to this end.

The draft resolution before us urges the parties to the conflict to immediately stop hostilities and resume negotiations at an early date and calls for an urgent solution to the humanitarian problems, particularly that of refugees, so as to restore stability in the region. It also calls upon the parties to ensure the safety and freedom of movement of UNCRO personnel. The Chinese delegation will therefore vote in favour of it.

Here, I wish to reiterate that the Chinese delegation's reservation with regard to the references in the draft resolution to Chapter VII of the Charter and resolution 816 (1993) remains unchanged.

Mr. Nkgowe (Botswana): The conflict in the former Yugoslavia does not lend itself to easy solutions. Yesterday, the international community witnessed a human tragedy of epic proportions in Srebrenica and Zepa, in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, when the Bosnian Serbs drove innocent civilians in their thousands from the comfort of their homes and put them on a journey into the unknown. Today, a similar catastrophe has befallen the Krajina Serbs in Croatia as a result of a broad military offensive launched by the Government of Croatia against Krajina, in blatant violation of Security Council resolutions. In both cases, the authority of the United Nations was undermined and defied with disdain.

Not only that, but the Croatian forces have clearly demonstrated disrespect for the authority of the United Nations by moving into the zones of separation and engaging in deliberate attacks against United Nations personnel. According to some reports, the United Nations forces, crouching in their bunkers to escape crossfire, were sought out, physically threatened and harassed by the forces of the Government of Croatia.

In the most unacceptable act of all, some of the peace-keepers were made to walk in front of the advancing Croatian military columns to serve as human shields. It is therefore most fitting that the draft resolution before us condemns in the strongest terms attacks against personnel of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) by Croatian forces, including those that resulted in the

death of one Danish and two Czech peace-keepers. My delegation wishes to convey its heartfelt condolences to the Governments of Denmark and the Czech Republic and, through them, to the bereaved families. We call upon the Government of Croatia to respect United Nations personnel and to ensure UNCRO's safety, security and freedom of movement to fulfil its mandate in accordance with Council resolutions.

We fully appreciate the frustration of the Government of Croatia with the continued occupation of its territory, but we do not believe that a military solution was the best answer. The use of force to resolve disputes is unacceptable to my delegation and we strongly deplore the forcible annexation of Krajina by Croatian Government forces. In its presidential statement on 3 August 1995, the Security Council urged the parties to exercise restraint and give the political process started by Ambassador Stoltenberg, Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, a chance to succeed, especially since the proposals were acceptable to the Krajina Serbs as a basis for further negotiations. It is most unfortunate that Croatia not only refused to explore all political avenues available and heed the advice of the United Nations, but went ahead and launched a military offensive against Krajina with tragic consequences for the local Serb population.

We have been shocked beyond belief by reports of direct shelling of civilian targets with heavy weapons and by further reports that in some cases fleeing refugees were intercepted and massacred in cold blood. Some 120,000 or more refugees are reported to have fled Krajina, causing a humanitarian tragedy of unprecedented magnitude. It is therefore not surprising that this tragedy has been described in the media as the worst incident of "ethnic cleansing" since the beginning of the war in the former Yugoslavia. There are also reports of looting, plunder and the general destruction of Serb property; this is not likely to encourage Croatian Serbs to remain in the country or to return if they have already fled. Nor does it augur well for the future peace and stability of Croatia. An imposed peace is unlikely to work, as the Croatian Serbs would seek retaliation, perhaps not today, tomorrow or next year, but in generations to come. This is why we are opposed to military solutions: they do not contribute to future peace, but tend to mortgage the lives of posterity to a future of hatred and uncertainty, which would make today's military success appear a pyrrhic victory several generations later.

We call upon the authorities in Zagreb to hold inviolate the civil and human rights of the local Serb population and to treat all prisoners of war in accordance with accepted standards of international law governing the rights of military personnel in conflict situations. All people of Serb origin who wish to leave should be allowed to do so without let or hindrance. Equally, those who wish to stay or return should be allowed to do so in conditions of safety and without discrimination or harassment based on ethnic origin.

In its short history of almost three decades, Botswana has fought for and defended the right of all peoples to political freedom and human equality. We have done this because of our innate belief in the equality of all human beings and the indivisibility of freedom and justice. Two wrongs never make a right. For us, the sanctity of and respect for human life extend to all peoples irrespective of creed, race or ethic affiliation. Thus, while we fully share the pain and suffering experienced by the peoples of both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia because of the wars raging in their countries, we have at the same time maintained a balanced position *vis-à-vis* the conflicts in those countries. We have joined in the condemnation of all violations of international humanitarian law committed in these conflicts irrespective of who may have committed them.

We believe that all the States that emerged from former Yugoslavia would contribute to peace if they recognized each other's right to exist within secure borders as sovereign nations. We think that recognition of the right of each Republic to exist would help eliminate the current conditions of insecurity in the Balkans, but we cannot be prescriptive here, because it is the sovereign right of each State, whether a Member of the United Nations or not, to decide how it wishes to conduct its external relations. We can only appeal for the recognition of the right of each State to exist for the sake of stability in the area, and can only hope that this would help end the unfortunate human tragedy that has been unfolding in the former Yugoslavia. But we can do no more.

Having said that, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us. We believe the Security Council is sending the right message: that civilians have the right to protection in any war, whether a war of aggression or a war to defend territory against aggression.

Mr. Sidorov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian Federation is gravely concerned by the situation that has arisen in recent days

in and around Croatia. Large-scale military operations by the Croatian army to seize Sectors North and South have overnight brought to naught the efforts of the international community, first and foremost those of the Security Council, the countries of the Contact Group and the international mediators, Mr. Stoltenberg and Mr. Bildt, in their continued attempts to find a political solution. The military actions of the Croatian army have brought the situation in the former Yugoslavia closer to the brink of a major war in the Balkans — and this at a time when there are real prospects for progress at the negotiating table.

We must note that what has taken hold in Zagreb is a stance of integrating Serb-populated regions by force, which has unfortunately been indirectly encouraged from the capitals of a number of major countries. We clearly see a situation in which the principle of a just solution is being sacrificed to a philosophy of *fait accompli*. We believe that this approach will have harmful consequences both for the settlement of the Yugoslav crisis and, in a broader sense, for the role to be played by the United Nations in maintaining and restoring international peace and security. One result of this policy which has now emerged is the mass exodus of the Serb population of Krajina, which has lived in this region for hundreds of years. The refugee situation can be called nothing less than a humanitarian catastrophe. Of special concern are reports of flagrant violations by Croatian armed forces of the norms of international humanitarian law, incidents of firing on convoys of refugees in Bosnian territory, and the use of cluster bombs.

In attacking Krajina, the Croatian side has not only violated many Security Council resolutions, but has also carried out a series of deliberate attacks on United Nations forces, which have involved loss of live. There are cases of using personnel of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) as human shields in the conduct of military operations, which has been sternly condemned by the Security Council.

The gravity of the current situation requires the adoption of urgent measures. We therefore took an active part in the preparation of the draft resolution before the Council today, which includes a number of provisions intended to prevent further deterioration of the situation. Of special importance in our view is the draft resolution's demand that the Government of the Republic of Croatia cease immediately all hostilities and comply with all relevant Council resolutions, including resolution 994 (1995), and that it respect fully the rights of the local Serb population.

The threats to use military means with respect to eastern Slavonia underscore the urgency of the Council's appeal to the countries, especially to the Government of Croatia, to exercise maximum restraint.

International humanitarian organizations should be guaranteed unhampered access to the relevant regions as well as to Serbian military personnel being detained by the Croatian Government forces. Those who commit violations of international humanitarian law should be held individually responsible in respect of such acts.

No less important is the demand by the Security Council that Croatia respect the status of United Nations personnel, put an end to attacks on it and punish those who are guilty of such attacks.

The draft resolution notes with concern reports of violations of resolution 713 (1991). We have a very solid basis for noting this. The tragic events in Croatia have once again reaffirmed that the fact that violations of the arms embargo go unpunished tempt the parties to the conflict to try to solve disputes not around the negotiating table but by force of arms. In this connection, the need to adopt additional measures to ensure effective compliance with Security Council resolution 713 (1991) is becoming more acute.

Yet another clear conclusion is that the United Nations peace-keeping operations in Croatia must continue in order to prevent a complete humanitarian catastrophe and to ensure objective international observation of the actions of the Croatian authorities with regard to the Serbian population that has come under its control. In this regard, any violations of international humanitarian law, from wherever they come, require the adoption of effective and impartial measures, including by the Security Council.

The situation in Croatia must remain under the close scrutiny of the Security Council, which, as the draft resolution points out, will be prepared to consider further measures to achieve compliance with all the provisions of the draft resolution. There are such measures that the Security Council can take, and this should be remembered by those who believe that the Council's decisions are not binding on them.

We think that the most important step we can take now is to return to the negotiation process. Understanding the need to counter the logic of violence with swift and decisive action, Russia has taken an

initiative to settle the conflict, by proposing a meeting of the Serbian and Croatian leaders, Mr. Milosevic and Mr. Tudjman, respectively, in Moscow. Regrettably, we must note that in Croatia the initial positive reaction to this initiative has been abandoned, and they have proved to be unprepared to begin a direct peaceful dialogue. We are convinced that the need for a lasting peace, also in the interests of the people of Croatia, will soon lead the leadership in Zagreb to the negotiating table. The Russian proposal remains valid.

As a result of a dialogue on 10 August between the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Nicolayevich Yeltsin, and President Milosevic in Moscow, the commitment to Belgrade to a political settlement of the entire Yugoslav crisis and to a solution of the problem of Bosnia on the basis of the peace plan and the ending of military hostilities everywhere was reaffirmed. We believe that Belgrade's constructive policy should be met by an adequate reaction on the part of the international community.

Finally, we need to take a decision to relieve Yugoslavia of the burden of sanctions. This would open the way to the beginning of a process of mutual recognition of the States located on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

The Russian President has proposed, in the light of the prevailing situation, that we take the following actions:

— The adoption of extreme measures to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe, to ensure for all refugees the unhindered return to their home, guaranteeing their safety. There must be free access to humanitarian assistance. Representatives of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international organizations must be granted the access required to monitor the observance of the rights of the entire population of Croatia, in full accordance with international rules. Of course, these requirements apply also to all other regions in the territory of the former Yugoslavia which have become battlefields.

— The safety of the United Nations peace-keepers must be ensured. This is an absolute imperative.

— An end to hostilities in the entire territory of Yugoslavia must be achieved. If that is not done, no political decisions can be achieved.

— An end must be put to delays in the implementation of the peace plan proposed by the international community, which constitutes a real alternative to an escalation of violence in Bosnia.

For this purpose, the Russian President has renewed a proposal for a meeting of the heads of key countries, with the participation of the parties to the conflict, the leaders of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. An important stage in the preparation for such a meeting could be a direct dialogue by the three leaders: Mr. Milosevic, Mr. Tudjman and Mr. Izetbegovic. Russia is prepared to organize such a dialogue also.

Hostilities in the area of the former Yugoslavia, be it in Croatia or in Bosnia, cannot be resolved militarily or by force. We are convinced not only that it is still possible to settle them peacefully, but that there is no other way. Russia is firmly determined to promote such a settlement.

Mr. Al-Khussaiby (Oman): Oman reiterates its commitment to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States in the region under consideration, including the Republic of Croatia. Stemming from this commitment, we have supported all efforts aimed at ensuring the rights of all the citizens of Croatia, including the Serb population living in the Krajina region, within the territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia.

On the other hand, we understand the frustration of the Croatian authorities when it comes to the question of the Krajina Serbs, who have been testing the patience of the international community for the past four years. Their engagement in the fighting inside the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, their cross-border violations of the international borders and the attacks they have mounted on the safe area of Bihac have all resulted in the latest events.

While calling on all the sides to refrain from fighting and to exercise maximum restraint in order not to escalate the war, we also stress the need for the Government of Croatia to adhere strictly to the provisions of the agreement it signed with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) on 6 August 1995 with regard to the humanitarian situation in areas of its country, to allow access to these areas by all humanitarian organizations and to create conditions conducive to the voluntary return of those persons who have left their homes. Any acts against civilians and the United Nations personnel will not be accepted. Here, my

delegation would like to join other speakers in conveying heartfelt condolences to the Government of the Czech Republic and the Danish authorities on the loss of life of their brave soldiers.

There could never be a peaceful solution through the use of force. My delegation supports all efforts to bring about a long and lasting peace in that region. We believe that the Security Council and the international community will do a great service to that war-torn region if and when we succeed in making all those countries in the region recognize each other.

Finally, in support of the desire of the overwhelming majority in the Security Council for the early adoption of the draft resolution before us, my delegation will vote in favour of it.

The President: I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1995/676.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Botswana, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Nigeria, Oman, Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1009 (1995).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Ladsous (France) *(interpretation from French):* The large-scale offensive launched on 4 August by the Government of the Republic of Croatia in Krajina was condemned by France in unequivocal terms. While Sector North and Sector South, where this offensive unfolded, are indeed parts of the territory of the Republic of Croatia, the Serb population in these regions do have rights, rights recognized by the international community, which prohibit any such military operation from being regarded as legitimate. Recognition of Croatia by the European Union was, I would remind the Council, made expressly contingent on recognition by that State of the rights of the Serb minority.

The resolutions of the Security Council make it incumbent upon the Croatian authorities to turn to negotiation to bring about reintegration within the Republic of the territories in question. By putting an end to discussions started in Geneva with the Serb party in Croatia and deliberately choosing the military option to restore their authority in those sectors, the Zagreb authorities took a totally unacceptable decision, a decision contrary to their international obligations.

The European Union took a clear stand along those lines. The resolution the Council has just adopted also restates this explicitly and demands full compliance with all Council resolutions, including resolution 994 (1995).

France stands in full solidarity with that demand. The Croatian Government must immediately halt any and all military activity in the Krajina sectors and refrain from all military action in Eastern Slavonia. But its obligations do not stop there. It must also come back to the negotiating table and strive in good faith to reach, with the Serb party in Croatia, an agreement guaranteeing the rights of all the communities. Without such a negotiated settlement, no viable solution could possibly be considered as established.

The resolution we have just adopted seems to us timely and fitting for three further reasons.

First, it places very special emphasis on respect for the rights of civilians. The very large number of people who have fled Croatian soil and headed towards areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina or of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia clearly demonstrates the scope of the human trauma triggered by the Croatian Government's offensive. The Serb populations must be free to move about and, in particular, those who have fled must be able to come back in satisfactory conditions of safety and security to their region of origin. Monitoring by humanitarian organizations to ensure respect for these rights seems essential to us, just as is access by representatives of the Red Cross to the soldiers of the Serb forces who have been taken prisoner. The text adopted stresses these points.

Secondly, the resolution embodies a very forceful condemnation of the behaviour of Croatian Government forces towards United Nations forces. During the events of the end of last week, personnel responsible for peace-keeping were attacked, and some of them were killed. In this connection, my Government extends its condolences to the Governments of the Czech Republic and Denmark. Certain particularly reprehensible acts, such as forcing the blue helmets to move forward in advance of the

forces involved in an offensive, were noted. Those responsible for such violations of the laws of war will have to be brought to trial. In this connection I must point out that my delegation is very concerned at the persistent obstacles placed in the way of the free movement of the rapid reaction force. A French artillery unit still continues to be hemmed in by such obstacles. There is absolutely no justification for this and it is totally unacceptable, because it prevents the effective deployment of the rapid reaction force — an essential component of the United Nations presence in the region.

Finally, the resolution we have just adopted very clearly warns that hostilities should not be pursued in the direction of Sector East, because this would raise by yet another notch the escalation and the risk of generalization of the conflict.

The Croatian Government has chosen not to take into account the repeated warnings the Security Council has addressed to it. Our resolution tells it that the international community and our Council do not absolve it of that choice.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): Italy voted in favour of the resolution just unanimously adopted by the Security Council — in the original drafting of which it participated — fully convinced that it was urgently needed. The resolution focuses on the humanitarian situation in Croatia, following the offensive of the Croatian forces in Krajina — a situation which arouses our deepest concern, especially in light of the recent reports about attacks and abuses against groups of refugees leaving the country. This new wave of 150,000 refugees and displaced persons constitutes another act of the long humanitarian tragedy in the former Yugoslavia. Such a situation could not be ignored by the Security Council. Therefore, the present resolution is both necessary and timely. It is a clear, unequivocal message to the parties, and especially to the Zagreb Government. Moreover, its adoption takes place in the light of the alarming signs of growing tension which come from Sector East, where a further escalation of the conflict might lead to a new and unprecedented scale of hostilities.

We should not forget that the Croatian offensive followed the breakdown of the peace talks in Geneva, under the auspices of Mr. Stoltenberg. This circumstance is particularly regrettable — and it is deeply regretted in the resolution we have just adopted — as a possible breakthrough seemed to be in sight and, in our view, deserved a renewed effort at negotiation instead of the military solution chosen by the Croatian Government.

Therefore, we welcome the fact that in the resolution adopted today the Security Council reiterates its call for a negotiated settlement which guarantees the rights of all communities and urges the Government of the Republic of Croatia to resume the peace talks. I wish to emphasize the words "negotiated settlement".

The fact that the self-styled State entity of the Krajina Serbs has disappeared in no way implies that the problem of the Serb residents in Croatia — who have been living there for many centuries — should be solved through a unilateral initiative by the Croatian Government. A viable solution should be sought by both parties, through negotiation under the auspices of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia. Allow me to recall briefly, Mr. President, that my country reached a negotiated agreement with the main linguistic minority living in Italy. We were able to do so through patient negotiation, and we strongly hope that this peaceful path will be followed by the Croatian Government and by the local Serb community.

Another important aspect dealt with by today's resolution is respect for the security and dignity of the United Nations personnel, whose courage and generosity in performing their duties will never be commended enough. Once more we have had to witness the death of three Blue Helmets — one Danish and two Czech — to whose Governments and families I wish to reiterate the deepest sympathy and condolences of the Italian Government and people. Once again United Nations peace-keepers have been subjected to unacceptable and intolerable humiliation and abuses, such as being used as human shields in front of attacking forces. Therefore, we welcome the resolution's strong condemnation of such attacks and abuses and its request to the Croatian Government to refrain from such actions in the future and bring to justice those guilty of any such attack or harassment. We have taken note of the formal assurances given to the Council in this regard a few minutes ago by the Ambassador of Croatia.

One of the reasons why my Government has vigorously condemned the Croatian offensive is the serious risk of a further escalation and generalization of the conflict throughout the former Yugoslavia. Recent reports of abuses by fleeing Krajina Serbs against the remaining Muslim and Croatian communities in the area of Banja Luka show us the sad repercussions on the

highly sensitive ethnic situation in Western Bosnia of this new flow of refugees. They confirm the growing interrelation between the Croatian and the Bosnian cases: every escalation of the conflict in one of those countries inevitably spills over into the other, creating new human tragedies and adding fuel to the fire.

The Government and the people of Italy are extremely sensitive to this new humanitarian emergency, which is taking place so close to our territory. We have provided the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees — whose efforts we all should highly appreciate — with a substantial amount of goods and equipment for initial assistance to the refugees and displaced people. As for the political aspects of the new crisis, our Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mme. Agnelli, has promptly contacted the authorities of Zagreb, Sarajevo and Belgrade, urging all of them to exert the utmost restraint, in order to prevent a general conflagration in the area of the former Yugoslavia, and above all to actively pursue a comprehensive negotiated agreement. We continue to believe strongly that any military action will have no other result than to add to an already too long chain of human suffering, increasing the hate and divisions among the peoples living in that area, and making a comprehensive solution more and more difficult to reach.

To conclude, the Croatian offensive has created an entirely new situation in the area. Needless to say, the mandate of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) will have to be adapted to this new situation. But we continue to believe that the presence of the United Nations in Croatia must be maintained. It is a necessary guarantee of respect for the human rights of the Serb population, in a difficult moment of transition, which again we hope will lead to a peaceful settlement. Therefore, we look forward to the next report of the Secretary-General on Croatia, and to his recommendations for the future of UNCRO. We hope that they will be submitted to the Council's attention as soon as possible, to help put an end to this difficult time of uncertainty and disarray.

Mr. Kovanda (Czech Republic): This is the first time my delegation has spoken this month, Mr. President, so let me at the outset congratulate you on having assumed the presidency of the Security Council and thank Ambassador Martínez Blanco for the job he and his delegation did last month.

The Government of Croatia has long intended to reintegrate parts of its sovereign territory that had been under the control of secessionist Croat Serb authorities. This was Croatia's sovereign right, and it can hardly be faulted for taking steps to this end. What my Government, however, does find strongly deplorable is the fact that the Croatian authorities elected to do so by military means, even at a time when not all diplomatic avenues had been completely exhausted. It had always been the position of my Government that a political solution was preferable, and we are still not convinced that such a solution was impossible.

One consequence of taking Knin and the former Sectors South and North is a wave of refugees unparalleled in the war to date, in a war which has already seen the most dramatic population shifts in Europe since the aftermath of the Second World War.

This refugee wave amounts to massive ethnic cleansing of vast areas of Croatia. Whether the Serb refugees are leaving on their own account or not is immaterial, and we view with scepticism Croat observations that Serb propaganda is solely responsible for their exodus, and assertions that Serbs are welcome in a post-Krajina Croatia.

The Croatian authorities will not, of course, hold people back by force. But they also bear a heavy responsibility to assure elementary dignity of the refugees and unconditionally to protect their human rights. Shelling refugee columns is not the best way to demonstrate respect for these rights. The Croatian authorities also have great responsibilities towards those ethnic Serbs who do elect to stay and to those who may decide to return. In fact, my Government urges them to create conditions in the newly reintegrated territories which will not only be conducive to stanching the refugee outflow but which will also facilitate and encourage the return of refugees.

The Croatian authorities decided to launch their military offensive literally over the heads of United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) personnel. Some, including two of my countrymen, lost their lives in the process. Others were gravely abused. Even today, UNCRO and other United Nations personnel do not have the freedom of movement they urgently need to fulfil their obligations. We deplore the abuse to which certain Croat commanders subjected UNCRO personnel and demand that appropriate measures be taken against them. We call for full freedom of movement of United Nations personnel. But even as we in the Czech Republic mourn our dead, we are

determined to continue shouldering our international responsibilities through our contribution to UNCRO.

At this point let me thank from the depths of my heart, on behalf of my Government, all those who have expressed condolences, either here or in informal consultations, and extend our own condolences to the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark.

The situation of UNCRO has changed dramatically, and we are anxiously awaiting recommendations from the Secretary-General on how best to modify its mandate. We anticipate a need to strengthen the United Nations presence in Eastern Croatia, in the area adjacent to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We strongly warn the Croatian authorities against seeking a military solution in this area, for, in our analysis, such an attempt could lead to a full-fledged war involving far greater military forces, territory and civilian population than ever before, a war that would eclipse anything the South Slav States have witnessed so far. In this context, we appreciate the responsible attitude that States of the region have demonstrated to date and appeal to all parties to seek a solution to the issue of Eastern Slavonia through peaceful means.

In conclusion, we ought to acknowledge that as an incidental result of the Croatian military action the siege of Bihac came to an end. This is an important result from several points of view. How important it was from the humanitarian point of view will become particularly evident when we contrast the fate of the men of Bihac with that of the men of Srebrenica, which we will be considering in our very next meeting.

The President: I thank the representative of the Czech Republic for his kind words addressed to me.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): For over three years the international community has worked to secure a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Croatia and to seek the reconciliation of a divided country. Numerous efforts by international mediators have been made without success, not least because of the intransigence of the local Croatian Serb authorities in acknowledging that their future lies as part of the Republic of Croatia.

The British Government is fully aware of the deep frustration experienced by the Croatian Government as a result of this intransigence, and we have repeatedly affirmed our commitment to Croatian sovereignty and territorial integrity and sought to help bring about a negotiated settlement preserving that territorial integrity. But that frustration does not justify a recourse to military action to impose a settlement. Furthermore, the decision to choose the military option, which has been condemned by the British Government, was made at a time when it was clear that the potential for further political negotiations had not been exhausted. It has inevitably meant the loss of innocent life — including lives of United Nations peace-keepers — and the exodus of Croatian Serbs from their rightful homes. Nor are we prepared to condone what has been called de facto "ethnic cleansing". We deeply regret that these Croatian actions have inevitably called into question Croatia's future relations with the rest of Europe.

The immediate priorities now are to bring the fighting to an end; to provide humanitarian relief for the very large numbers of displaced persons — by many estimates well over 100,000; to prevent a resurgence of fighting in Eastern Slavonia and the consequent risks of an escalation in the conflict; and to see that the safety and rights of the members of the Serb community who want to stay in Croatia are guaranteed. Thereafter, we look to all concerned to resume the dialogue on a negotiated settlement, which is the only way in which long-term stability can be assured. We call on all concerned to show the utmost restraint.

We also look, in particular, to the Croatian Government fully to uphold the civil rights of minorities in its country and actively to promote the conditions that will help persuade those Serbs who have fled that it is indeed safe to return and that they will be treated fairly by the local Croatian authorities. If the Croatian Government is to give the lie to accusations of de facto "ethnic cleansing", it must demonstrate by actions, and not just by words, that it is committed to fulfilling its obligations, including those allowed for in its Constitution, as far as civil rights are concerned. This will require a sustained commitment at all levels. Access to the region by international monitors is the essential first step to help re-establish that confidence. The British Government is grateful to Mr. Akashi for his strenuous efforts in that regard.

As a troop contributor to the United Nations peace forces in the former Yugoslavia, the British Government has also joined those who have strongly condemned the attacks on and the treatment of United Nations peace-keepers, who were present in the Republic of Croatia at the request of its Government. Our condolences go to the Danish and Czech Governments, and also to the families

of those soldiers who were killed as a result of actions by the Croatian armed forces. This Council expects the Croatian Government to punish all those responsible without delay, and we expect the Secretary-General to be in a position shortly to confirm that this is in hand. In the meantime, the future of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) in the Republic of Croatia will need careful consideration, and we, too, look forward to receiving the Secretary-General's recommendations in the near future.

Mrs. Albright (United States of America): My Government supports this resolution as an expression of continued commitment by this Council to peace and to the relief of human suffering in the former Yugoslavia.

We regret the decision by the Government of Croatia to launch an offensive against the Krajina region. We also urge all parties to refrain from further attacks, whether within Croatia or in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The latest round of violence has produced yet another flow of civilian refugees within the former Yugoslavia. By tractor, truck, car and cart, tens of thousands have fled the current military operations. The protection of those civilians must be a priority for all parties concerned. The rights of Serbs who choose to remain in Croatia must also be respected. History warns us that the failure to safeguard innocent lives leads only to more hatred, killing and destruction. For this reason, it is essential that international agencies have unimpeded access to observe conditions in Krajina and to provide humanitarian relief where needed.

The turbulence of the past week's events, coupled with restrictive policies imposed by the Government of Croatia, have made it difficult to assess the extent to which Croatian forces or their Bosnian allies may have been guilty of violations of international humanitarian law. My Government expects the war-crimes Tribunal to investigate allegations of abuse against unarmed civilians — including reports that five elderly Serbs were killed and refugees bombed in the village of Dvor — and we will support fully the Tribunal's work.

We join as well in condemning in strong terms the wrongful acts committed against United Nations peace-keeping forces and in the Council's extension of condolences to the families of the Czech and Danish peace-keepers who were killed. In this regard, let me welcome the statement of the representative of Croatia accepting responsibility for attacks on United Nations peace-keepers, making a commitment to investigate these incidents and promising cooperation with the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) and other international organizations.

Many in Croatia have hailed the recent military actions as a great victory. But it is difficult to see how any society can derive real satisfaction from the defeat and flight of hundreds of thousands of its own citizens. This resolution reminds Croatia of its obligation to create conditions conducive to the safe return of those persons who have left their homes, and it stresses the importance of granting access by the International Committee of the Red Cross to those who have been taken prisoner or detained.

At the same time, while we regret the means used, we must also recognize that the new safe area of Bihac is now open to humanitarian relief. For the citizens of Bihac, the long siege is over — and let it remain so.

The events of this past week have not changed the overriding imperative for all parties in the former Yugoslavia, which is to cease the conduct of war and explore instead, with seriousness and good faith, the options that exist for achieving peace. That is the one path towards real security. That is the only way to bring the cycle of disruption and tragedy that has affected all the peoples of the region to an end.

Finally, let met categorically deny the allegation that I was told had been made by Mr. Djokic — that the United States gave tactical advice or logistical support to the Government of Croatia's military operation. This baseless charge can only make it harder for my Government to see the day when Serbia and Montenegro can rejoin the community of nations.

Mr. Cárdenas (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Once again we find ourselves, in the crisis affecting the Balkans, demanding the immediate halting of armed action on the part of a State — action which is clearly a violation of resolutions adopted by this Council. We are doing so — as so often in such instances — for, among other reasons, the purpose of avoiding silence by the Council being construed as a kind of tacit acceptance of a policy of *fait accompli* achieved by force.

Working in such a context is even more difficult when the developments in question occur while there is a redoubling of negotiating efforts to secure a political settlement to the conflict.

In drafting the resolution that the Council adopted a few moments ago, it proved particularly difficult to find words adequately to express the real indignation over the lamentable fact that troops of the peace-keeping forces with which the international community is trying generously to help the parties to resolve their conflicts — a generosity not adequately reciprocated — lost their lives as a result of deliberate action by members of one of these parties. We ask the Governments of the Czech Republic and the Kingdom of Denmark to accept our condolences at the irrational death of their soldiers during the recent massive Croat invasion of Sector South and Sector North.

As we did in the informal consultations before the adoption of the resolution on which the Council has just voted, we take the view that the Government of Croatia must now tell the Council, in detail, of all the measures that we hope and expect will be taken quickly to bring to justice and punish with appropriate severity all those responsible for the attacks and unspeakable abuses against United Nations personnel.

We are obliged to the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Croatia. In the circumstances of its submission, it is more than understandable that he had to await further developments before being in a position to suggest a course of action with regard to the mandate of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO). We hope that the Secretary-General will be in a position to communicate his ideas on this subject to us as soon as possible. We take the view that the mandate, and perhaps the very presence, of UNCRO must now be reconsidered in depth realistically, without losing sight of the need to prevent civilians from suffering indiscriminately more than they have already, particularly when refugees and displaced persons are involved. The figures indicating the magnitude of their tragedy are in this case enormous.

Moreover, we expect the Government of Croatia, in accordance with what its Permanent Representative recently told the President of the Security Council, to have regard — and show that regard by deeds and by refraining from specific acts — to the extremely delicate nature of the current situation in the region of Eastern Slavonia.

We must also point out something which, though obvious, must be reiterated: any political solution must be based on negotiation between the parties. But negotiations lose their character as such if the parties do not carry them out with basic good faith, fully respecting that principle with daily, tangible implementation.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Indonesia.

The Indonesian delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution before the Council today since it embodies principles that we have consistently espoused, including commitment to the search for a comprehensive negotiated settlement of the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, the need to respect international humanitarian law and the inviolability of all United Nations personnel, as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States of the former Yugoslavia.

My delegation has followed the recent developments in Croatia with deep concern, especially in view of their effects on the civilian population and the inherent risk of escalation of the violence, which could engulf the entire region. The Indonesian delegation appeals to all parties concerned to immediately cease their hostilities and seek to prevent any further widening of the conflict. In this regard, we should like to place particular emphasis on the need for the parties concerned to exercise the utmost restraint in and around Sector East. This conflict can never be solved by resorting to war — an option that will simply lead to greater human suffering, casualties and injustice. We underline the need to leave no stone unturned in the search for a comprehensive, lasting and just settlement to the conflict, not only in Croatia but also in the territories of the former Yugoslavia as a whole.

Further, my delegation welcomes the agreement that has been reached between the Republic of Croatia and the United Nations peace forces to fully respect the rights of the local Serb population, allow access to them by international humanitarian organizations and create conditions conducive to the return of those who have left their homes. My delegation is confident that the Government of Croatia fully appreciates the importance that the international community attaches to its compliance with the letter and spirit of this agreement.

Finally, my delegation would like to express its appreciation to the authors of the resolution and to extend its gratitude to all those United Nations personnel who have risked their lives and made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of peace. In this regard, I should like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's deep condolences to the people and Governments of Denmark and the Czech Republic, and the families concerned, on the untimely and tragic deaths of their personnel, who served valiantly as members of the United Nations peace-keeping forces.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.